



# Public Health Bulletin

A Publication of the Public Health Department, Gregory Thomas, M.D., Director • [www.slopublichealth.org](http://www.slopublichealth.org)  
2191 Johnson Avenue • P.O. Box 1489 • San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 • (805) 781-5500 • (805) 781-5543 fax

Gregory Thomas, M.D., M.P.H.



**Health Director  
Notes...**

## Exposure to Tobacco Smoke May Increase Risk of Colic

### West Nile Virus

As of September 14, there were 523 human West Nile Virus infections in California; 50 asymptomatic individuals screened at blood banks, 174 West Nile fever cases, 162 West Nile neuroinvasive disease, and 144 unknown cases. The median age of these cases was 52 years of age. There have been 15 West Nile Virus related fatalities this year. In San Luis Obispo County, nine birds and one mosquito pool have tested positive.

The key to prevention is avoidance of mosquito bites:

- use screens in all windows and doors at home.
- use DEET when outside.
- wear long sleeves and long pants, especially during dawn and dusk hours or in high mosquito areas.
- drain standing water in yards and avoid over-watering which leads to standing water.

### Cryptosporidiosis Outbreak

You are probably aware of the intestinal illness outbreak epidemiologically linked to the Mustang Water Slides. At this time, more than 480 individuals who attended the water slides or close family

Exposure to tobacco smoke may increase babies' risk of colic, according to a review of more than 30 studies on the topic.

Colic often starts a few weeks after birth, peaking at about five to eight weeks of age. It usually goes away by four months of age. Babies' symptoms include irritability, inconsolable crying, red face, clenched fists, drawn-up legs, and screaming.

Colic affects an estimated 5%-28% of babies born in Western countries. Its causes have been attributed to everything from exposure to cow's milk proteins to feeding difficulties to maternal depression or anxiety.

Not all of those theories have been scientifically confirmed. Shenassa and Brown say colic probably has multiple independent causes.

The review was conducted by Edmond Shenassa, ScD, of the community health department at Brown Medical School, and Mary-Jean Brown, ScD, RN, of the society, human development, and the health department of Harvard

School of Public Health. Their report appears in the October issue of the journal of *Pediatrics*.

### Smoking's Role

Smoking has also been linked to colic; Shenassa and Brown's review supports that idea. "Exposure to cigarette smoke and its metabolites may be linked to infantile colic," they write.

Tobacco smoke appears to raise levels of a gut hormone called motilin in the blood and intestines. Motilin increases the contractions of the stomach and intestines, increasing the movement of food through the gut.

"Higher-than-average motilin levels are linked to elevated risks of infantile colic," say the researchers, who can't yet trace the exact chain reaction that links motilin to colic.

They also don't know when tobacco smoke starts raising the risk of colic.

Babies can be exposed to smoke while they're still in the womb, through breast milk, or by being

**continued on page 2**

### Highlights in this Issue:

Children's Health Initiative of SLO County	3
Global Polio Eradication Initiative	3
Communicable Disease Table	4
Staphylococcus Aureus Skin Infections in SLO County	Insert

**continued on page 2**

## Risk of Colic (cont.)

around a smoker after birth.

Nearly half of all U.S. women who smoke keep on smoking through their pregnancies, according to the researchers. That's nearly 12% of all women who give birth.

Nonsmoking pregnant women can also be exposed to secondhand smoke at home or at work.

"More than 500,000 infants each year are exposed to cigarette smoke in utero," say Shenassa and Brown.

### Long-Term Consequences

Some research indicates that colic's impact can linger. For instance, one study showed that infants who were colicky at three months of age had more sleep difficulties and temper tantrums at three years of age compared with children that never had colic.

Once-colicky babies may also have more feeding difficulties, and the stress of tending to a colicky child could affect a caregiver's relationship with the baby. That's all the more reason to quit smoking and avoid tobacco smoke, say the researchers.

"Decreased exposure to tobacco smoke can be expected to provide widespread, long-term health benefits to maternal and child populations," they conclude.

### SOURCES:

Shenassa, E. *Pediatrics*, October 2004; vol 114: pp e497-e505.  
News release, American Academy of Pediatrics.

Source of article:

<http://my.webmd.com/content/article/94/103060.htm>

Women and Tobacco

<http://member.globalink.org/inwat>

\* \* \* \* \*

## Health Officer Notes (cont.)

members reported having diarrhea. There are currently 52 laboratory confirmed cryptosporidiosis cases.

Public Health became aware of this as a result of a parent who suspected the connection. Physician contact later confirmed the pattern. Earlier physician notification of an outbreak may have helped our department investigate and break the link sooner.

Please remember to notify the Public Health Department about reportable communicable diseases and any outbreak.

### Influenza Vaccines

As you may have heard, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) announced on October 5 that 46-48 million doses of flu vaccine from Chiron (Evan's in the U.S.) has been lost due to contamination. This represents about 50% of the U.S. supply. For California, this means the State will not be able to distribute 573,000 doses for seniors and the medically high-risk. The CDC has revised its list of equally ranked priority groups to receive the remaining vaccine:

The influenza vaccine is recommended for:

- All children 6-23 months of age.
- Household contacts and out-of-home caretakers of infants under 6 months.
- Adults 65 years of age or older.
- Residents of long-term care facilities and nursing homes.
- Individuals aged 2-64 with underlying chronic medical conditions.
- Children 6 months to 18 years of age on long-term aspirin treatment.
- All women who will be pregnant during influenza season.
- Health-care workers with direct patient care.

The Public Health Department is assessing the situation and polling the medical community and pharmacies to determine how San Luis Obispo County will be affected. The PHD will have vaccine for the pediatric population, which is eligible through the Vaccine For Children program (uninsured, Medi-Cal, CHDP). It is strongly encouraged that anyone in the above priority areas contact their physician or clinic and schedule a flu shot. The CDC has also asked for individuals who are not in the high-risk groups to forgo a flu shot this season.

It is recommended that everyone take the following steps to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid contact with co-workers and friends.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

continued on page 3 

## Global Polio Eradication Initiative

In May 1988, the World Health Assembly, the governing body of the World Health Organization (WHO), resolved to eradicate polio from the world. Along with Rotary International, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO spearheads the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, an effort that has involved 15 years, 200 countries and 20 million volunteers at an international investment of more than \$3 billion, to stop the transmission of poliovirus.

The world has never had a better chance to end polio. It may also be the last chance. If the world does not seize the opportunity now, both risks and cost will increase dramatically. Wild poliovirus now is endemic in only six countries – Nigeria, India, Pakistan, Niger, Afghanistan and Egypt – the lowest number in history since polio was first recorded. Polio transmission is now primarily confined to a limited number of polio “hot spots” within these endemic countries. Five states and provinces within Nigeria, India and Pakistan are linked to more than 75% of all new cases of polio worldwide, and represent the key to stopping transmission globally.

There was much progress in 2003. Three key poliovirus reservoirs – India, Pakistan and Egypt – had the lowest levels of poliovirus transmission ever recorded there. India, Pakistan and Egypt's success sets the stage for stopping transmission there in the next six months. In Pakistan, vaccinators are gaining access to increasing numbers of households by using a controversial method – employing female vaccinators who can enter every home to search for and immunize previously unreached children.

There are several challenges remaining. Nigeria is currently the greatest risk to global eradication. In late 2003, immunization activities against polio were brought to a halt in the state of Kano, the last major polio reservoir in Africa, because of unfounded rumors which suggested that the polio vaccine was not safe. With immunization activities stalled in Kano and polio campaigns of a suboptimal quality in other northern states, polio was able to creep back across Nigeria and spread into seven previously polio-free countries, putting over 15 million children at risk and necessitating a massive immunization campaign across west and central Africa.

In 2003, funding shortfalls required most polio-free countries to stop their polio immunization campaigns, thereby leaving millions of children more vulnerable to poliovirus infections from endemic countries, underscoring the urgency of interrupting poliovirus transmission in the six remaining endemic countries.

Polio knows no borders. The world's few remaining reservoirs of poliovirus continue to pose a significant risk due to the threat of polio importations, which can spread rapidly and threaten millions of unprotected children.

## Children's Health Initiative of San Luis Obispo County

Outreach to uninsured children age 0-18 eligible for Medi-Cal and Healthy Families is underway in San Luis Obispo County as of August 2004.

One application to the Department of Social Services will now result in an eligibility determination and enrollment for children eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families.

Uninsured children at or below 300% of poverty level, not eligible for Medi-Cal or Healthy Families will be eligible for Healthy Kids coverage due to begin in April 2005.

For more information about participating in Healthy Kids outreach, contact Christina Chow at the Department of Social Services at 781-1897.

---

### Health Officer (cont.)

- Properly dispose of used tissues.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water or a hand sanitizer to help protect yourself from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Stay healthy by eating healthy foods, drinking plenty of water, exercising, getting plenty of rest, not smoking and avoiding alcohol.

\* \* \* \* \*

# San Luis Obispo County Reported Cases of Selected Communicable Diseases - Fall 2004

Disease	Jan-June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Total 2004	Total 2003
AIDS	0	0	0	0	0*	6
<b>Amebiasis</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Brucellosis	0	0	0	1	1	0
<b>Campylobacter</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>
Chlamydia	234	53	26	34	347	492
<b>Coccidioidomycosis</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>71</b>
Cryptosporidiosis	5	0	0	42	47	8
<b>E. Coli 0157:H7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Giardia	2	3	3	0	8	12
<b>PPNG</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Gonorrhea	22	7	2	0	31	56
<b>Hepatitis A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
Hepatitis B	5	18	1	2	26	1
<b>Hepatitis C Acute</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Hepatitis C Chronic	185	48	11	64	308	594
<b>Hepatitis, Unspecified</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Measles (Rubeola)	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Meningitis - Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>34</b>
Meningitis - Viral	12	3	2	4	21	28
<b>Meningitis, H-Flu</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Meningococcal Disease	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Pertussis</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Salmonellosis</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>
Shigellosis	1	0	0	0	1	4
<b>Syphilis - Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>
Tuberculosis	1	1	0	0	2	8
<b>West Nile Fever</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
W. Nile Virus Neuroinvasive	0	0	0	1	1	0
*Total may change with late reporting						



San Luis Obispo County  
Public Health Department  
P.O. Box 1489  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406